

**PATENT**  
Atty. Dkt. No. 2000-0660 CIP

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

26. (Currently Amended) In an Ethernet protocol network having at least one switch with plurality of ingress ports that are each adapter to receive at least one Ethernet frame that includes a tag that identifies a particular network sending the frame, and the switch having at least one egress port on which the frame is output, a method for operating said switch, comprising the step of:

mapping the tag that identifies said particular network in the Ethernet frame received at the one ingress port to a second tag associated with the egress port through which the switch outputs the frame; and

overwriting the tag in the Ethernet frame with the second tag prior to outputting the frame on the egress port.

27. (Original) The method according to claim 26 wherein the tag is mapped using a unique tuple of the port and a Virtual Local Area Network (VLAN) identifier.

28. (Original) The method according to claim 27 wherein the Virtual Local Area Network (VLAN) identifier has an prescribed address space and wherein each egress port can support a quantity of VLANS limited only by the prescribed address space of the VLAN identifier.

29. (Original) The method according to claim 28 wherein the VLAN identifier has an address space of 4096 and wherein each egress port can support 4096 separate VLANs.

30. (Currently amended) In an Ethernet protocol network having at least one switch with plurality of ingress ports that are each adapted to receive at least one Ethernet frame that includes a Virtual Local Area Network (VLAN) ID tag that identifies a particular network sending the frame to that ingress port, and the

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switch has at least one egress port on which the frame is output, a method for operating said switch, comprising the step of:

mapping the tag that identifies said particular network in the Ethernet frame received at the one ingress port to a second tag using a unique tuple of the port and a Virtual Local Area Network (VLAN) identifier; and

overwriting the tag in the Ethernet frame received at the one ingress port with the second tag prior to outputting the frame on the egress port.